



New Jersey Department of Children and Families Policy Manual

Manual:	CP&P	Child Protection and Permanency	Effective Date:
Volume:	II	Intake, Investigation and Response	
Chapter:	B	Intake	3-7-2011
Subchapter:	1	Processing Specific Referrals	
Issuance:	2100	Referrals on Behalf of Pregnant Inmates	

Referrals on Behalf of Pregnant Inmates

Purpose 3-7-2011

This policy serves to assist a correctional facility in the planning for the safe placement of an expectant inmate's child, once the infant is born. The inmate may identify a caregiver for the infant, or request resource family care or adoption planning.

If it is determined that the plan for the infant is neither safe nor appropriate due to the proposed caregiver or his or her family/a household member having prior or current CP&P history, or having committed an ASFA non-waivable crime, State Central Registry notifies the correctional facility that the proposed caregiver is not suitable to care for an infant, and that another plan is needed.

The majority of such referrals come from the Edna B. Mahon Women's Correctional Center.

Policy 3-7-2011

The SCR Special Duties Unit conducts a search in New Jersey SPIRIT to determine whether a named caregiver is known to CP&P as a confirmed perpetrator of child abuse/neglect, or has a criminal history record. By so doing, SCR/CP&P is neither approving nor rejecting the named person as a care provider for an infant beyond the scope of the NJS search, nor is SCR/CP&P initiating any action to conduct permanency planning on behalf of the infant, birth mother (inmate), birth father, or maternal or paternal relatives.

If the inmate does not have a viable, safe plan for the care of her infant, and SCR is contacted for CP&P to provide placement services, CP&P will become actively engaged with the birth mother (inmate), birth father, and family toward making a permanency plan for the infant in accordance with Department of Children and Families service principles, mission, and ideology.

Authority 3-7-2011

N.J.A.C. 10A:16-6.6(c) and (e), Placement of Infants.

Definitions 3-7-2011

"Viable Plan" - For the purpose of this policy, "viable plan" means a plan that meets the needs for the **safety** and **well-being** of the infant.

Referrals From Correctional Facilities 3-7-2011

The State Central Registry (SCR) Special Duties Unit screens and processes all referrals received, primarily by fax or letter, from the Department of Corrections when:

- A correctional facility expresses concern about a pregnant inmate's placement plans for the care of her newborn;
- An inmate requests resource family home placement or adoption planning for her infant(s) following birth.

Action Taken 3-7-2011

- The Screener completes background checks (via an NJS search) on the proposed caregiver and all other adults in the home. See [CP&P-II-A-1-100](#). Note: The Screener contacts the reporter for more information, as needed, to complete the background check.
- The Screener and Supervisor conference the referral with the SCR Casework Supervisor, if a Promis/Gavel check reveals a crime that may be waived or a non-ASFA crime. See [CP&P-IV-B-2-200](#).

Notify the Correctional Facility 3-7-2011

Use CP&P Form [9-79](#), Letter to Correctional Facility Regarding Expectant Inmate, to notify the correctional facility of the suitability of the proposed caregiver.

- Once it is determined that the proposed caregiver and family/household members have neither a CP&P history nor criminal history, the SCR Special Duties Unit completes CP&P Form [9-79](#), Letter to Correctional Facility Regarding Expectant Inmate, to advise the correctional facility Social Worker of the results of the search; and that SCR/CP&P will take no further action on the matter.
- When it is determined that the plan for the infant is neither safe nor appropriate due to the proposed caregiver or a family/household member

having prior or current CP&P history, or having committed an ASFA non-waivable crime, notify the correctional facility using CP&P Form [9-79](#); explain that the proposed caregiver is not suitable, and that another plan is needed.

CWS Referral 3-7-2011

The Department of Corrections' regulations require that a correctional facility housing a pregnant inmate make a referral to CP&P (SCR) if the inmate cannot name a viable, safe caregiver for her infant and is, therefore, contemplating resource family care for, or adoption of, the infant.

The Special Duties Unit creates a Screening Summary, DCF Form [1-1](#), in NJ SPIRIT, and codes it CWS when there is no viable plan for the infant. Assign the referral to the appropriate Local Office, based on the home address of the inmate. The response time is within five (5) work days. (A more timely response is warranted, if the inmate is in the hospital, the infant is already born, or the birth is imminent.)

The assigned Worker counsels and advises the pregnant inmate about:

- The importance of identifying the infant's father, as well as maternal and paternal relatives as potential placement resource(s);
- Permanency planning;
- Timeframes for out-of-home placements based on ASFA requirements;
- The Division's resource family care and adoption programs; AND

Upon the birth of the child, the Worker:

- Prepares and arranges for the signing of any and all required documents;
- Obtains a court order for custody and authority to place the infant;
- Secures the most appropriate safe placement for the infant upon discharge from the hospital;
- Obtains the infant's birth and medical records;
- Engages the mother, father, maternal and paternal relatives, and others identified by the mother to plan for the infant (see [CP&P-III-B-5-500](#), Family Team Meetings); and
- Commences permanency planning for the infant.

The Division follows prescribed policies, procedures, and statutory mandates relative to processing a child for placement in a resource family home or adoptive home, as appropriate.

Relevant NJS Windows and Forms 3-7-2011

- DCF Form [1-1](#), Screening Summary
- DCF Form [3-1](#), CWS Assessment Summary
- CP&P Form [9-79](#), Letter to Correctional Facility Regarding Expectant Inmate